

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF PUERTO RICO

The United States of America, Plaintiff v. JEFFREY MIGUEL AQUINO MEJIAS, Defendant.

Cr. No. 25-140(GMM)
SENTENCING MEMORANDUM

"Stumbling is not falling." — Malcolm X

Disappointment doesn't just leave a person feeling let down—it settles deep in the heart, shaking confidence, draining joy, and clouding judgment. It causes one to question everything: *Did I make the right choice? Did I trust the wrong people? Should I have just stayed where I was instead of stepping out in faith?*

On April 11, 2025, at DE- 20, Aquino-Mejia plead guilty, pursuant to a straight plea, to the sole count of the Indictment charging him with re-entry of a deported alien in violation of 8 U.S.C. §1326(b)(2).

The statutory exposure is as follows:

Imprisonment:	0-20 years (8 U.S.C. §1326(b)(2))
Supervised Release:	up to 3 years (18 U.S.C. 3583(b)(2))
Probation:	1-5 years (18 U.S.C. §3561(c)(1))
Fine:	max of \$250,000 (18 U.S.C. 3571(b)(3))
SMA:	\$100 (18 U.S.C. §3013(a)(2)(A))

The guidelines exposure is as follows:

Imprisonment:	-base offense level (USSG 2L1.2(a))	+8
	-USSG 2L1.2(b)(2)(D) enhancement	
	due to prior 922(g) conviction	
	for time served (366days)	+4
	-USSG 3E1.1 (a) acceptance of resp.	-2
	-ABOL	10

-CHC points 2 (USSG 4A1.1(b)) CHC II

-Cross reference CHC and ABOL (8-14 mo imp)

Supervised Release:	1- 3 years (USSG 5D1.2(a)(2))
Probation:	1-5 years (USSG 5B1.1, 5B1.2)
Fine:	\$4,000-\$40,000 (USSG 5E1.2(c)(3))
SMA:	\$100. (USSG 5E1.3)

All arguments presented in this memorandum are presented in support of a variant sentence of time served, no fine, supervision to follow and a \$100 SMA. The requested sentence is justified when we look at all the 18 U.S.C. §3553 factors together.

At 23 years old, Jeffrey Miguel Aquino Mejias, “Aquino-Mejias”, made a decision that many young fathers in desperate situations have made. With no stable income in the Dominican Republic and a young son depending on him, he left everything behind and risked his life on a small boat—what they call a *yola*—to get to Puerto Rico. He did this not for adventure or personal gain, but for a chance to provide a better future for his child.

PAST CONVICTION 21-216(SCC)

When he arrived, he worked hard. But like many undocumented immigrants, he struggled to maintain consistent employment. Eventually, he found himself out of work and surrounded by individuals who made poor choices. Fearing for his safety, he purchased a firearm. He did not fully understand the legal consequences of that decision in Puerto Rico.

One day, while driving through Piñero with tinted windows, the police stopped Jeffrey. They asked to search his vehicle and found the firearm. Though he lacked legal immigration status, he had obtained a valid Puerto Rican driver’s license and had always tried to live as responsibly as he could under difficult circumstances. He was sentenced to one year in prison.

At the time of his arrest, his son was seven years old. That was also the moment when the weight of separation from his family—his reason for migrating—hit hardest. He felt he had failed everyone he had hoped to help.

Aquino-Mejias' mother and two brothers have legal status to visit the United States. They are a very close-knit family. See images of Aquino-Mejias with his mother and brothers.



Aquino-Mejias' family was devastated when they learned the full extent of what had happened. They knew so little of his daily struggles and were heartbroken to discover the circumstances that had led him to prison. His mother, Ruth Mejía-De La Cruz; his brother, Jimmy M. Aquino-Mejías; and his maternal sibling, Darlin Pérez-Mejías, were particularly affected. The news shattered them, as they tried to come to terms with the pain Jeffrey had endured in silence.

During that same period, Aquino-Mejias had begun a new relationship with Daisyliz Carrion, a caring and stable woman with two young children—Dylan and Amalia—who quickly came to see Jeffrey as their father. But now, he wasn't there for them either. He had let down not just his biological son, but also the family he was building in Puerto Rico.

After serving his sentence, Aquino-Mejias was deported back to the Dominican Republic. He sat down with his family and told them the truth. They were saddened, but they stood by him. He took whatever work he could find, including a job as a garbage truck driver. But despite his efforts, the economic reality was harsh—he simply couldn’t provide enough for his family, who were growing up without the support he had once risked everything to give.

Throughout his time back in the Dominican Republic, Daisyliz would visit him. But traveling with two young children was difficult and expensive. Still, her love and commitment never wavered. Dylan and Amalia still consider Jeffrey their dad. He has raised them, guided them, and provided what he could from afar.

CURRENT OFFENSE

So, despite knowing the consequences, Aquino-Mejias made the heartbreakin choice to return to Puerto Rico illegally. He didn’t do it for himself—he did it for his family. Sometimes, when you’re a father, you do what you must. That decision was not made lightly. It was the decision of a man desperate to be present and provide for those who depended on him.

Aquino-Mejias’ own childhood was shaped by trauma and early responsibility. When he was just 11 years old, his father, Miguel Julio Aquines, was tragically killed during a robbery. From that moment on, Aquino-Mejias had no choice but to step into the role of provider. He began working at a gas station while still attending school, and though he later tried to pursue a college education, he had to put those dreams on hold to continue supporting his loved ones. His family’s needs always came first.

Today, Aquino-Mejias is no longer the same man who once acted out of fear and confusion. He carries deep remorse for his past, especially for the trust he lost. But through that pain, he has found clarity. His priority is and always will be his family.

FUTURE PLANS

Aquino-Mejias has no interest in returning to Puerto Rico again. He understands the law, the cost of poor decisions, and the value of rebuilding trust. His partner, Daisyliz— Dental radiology technician—is now pregnant with their first child together, and she has decided to move permanently to the Dominican Republic to build a life with him. She is due in November 2025. See positive pregnancy test below.

 LAB. CLINICO CAMPO RICO LABORATORIO CLINICO CAMPO RICO	929 AVE ROBERTO SANCHEZ VILELLA URB COUNTRY CLUB SAN JUAN, PR 00924 Email: labcamri@gmail.com			Clia: 40D0693615 Lic: 786 Telephone: 787-762-0655 Fax: 787-830-7605
Patient CARRION ROSA, DAYSILIX URB METROPOLIS CALLE 3 A 33 CAROLINA PR 00987 Tel: 939-277-2332 Cel: Trab:	Lab. Number 2590705	Lab. Date 03/13/2025	Patient ID 22619	
Referred by PACIENTE PRIVADO	Birthdate 01/10/1994	Age 31 year(s)	Sex F	
Tel:	Order Number 95306	<i>[Sello CTMPR / \$.05 / MGZ6 / 786]</i> Lab. Director LCDA ADA ENID QUINONES, MT ASCP 2298		
Test	Result	H/L	Rck	Reference Range
SEROLOGY				
BETA SUB UNIT	POSITIVE			
Comment <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> METHOD: BY CLARITY. THE PREGNANCY TEST IS A QUALITATIVE IMMUNOASSAY FOR THE DETECTION OF HUMAN CHRONIC GONADOTROPIN (HCG) IN HUMAN URINE OR SERUM FOR THE EARLY DETECTION OF PREGNANCY. THE HCG PREGNANCY SERUM/URINE TEST DETECTS SERUM OR URINARY HCG AT A CONCENTRATION OF 20mIU/ml OR GREATER. </div>				
Received: 03/13/2025 11:30 AM Reported: 03/13/2025 12:03 PM	Processed: 03/13/2025 12:00 PM By: LCDA. DENISSE M BERRIOS , MT LIC.7305	Printed:		

"Los resultados deben ser interpretados y consultados por un medico licenciado para la proteccion del paciente"

Even the biological father of her other children lives in the Dominican Republic, making the move a natural choice for their family. Jeffrey plans to return to work as a truck driver and take college courses. Together, they are building a stable home—one built on lessons learned, on love, and on a shared future.

Aquino-Mejias looks forward to seeing and supporting his son one again. See photo of Aquino-Mejias and son below.



Aquino-Mejias also looks forward to caring for his elderly grandparents. See image below.



Aquino-Mejias has hope. He

has a renewed purpose. Prior to his arrest in 2021, Aquino Mejias had completed 3 years towards a bachelor's degree in systems engineering at the Universidad Tecnologica de Santo Domingo. Enrolment documents for the years 2011-13 available upon request. He dreams of finishing the college education he once had to abandon. More than anything, he is committed to becoming the husband, father, and man his family deserves.

Several family and friends have come forward with character reference letter. All are in Spanish and available upon request. Below is a table summarizing the content of the letters.

Name	Relationship with Aquino-Mejias and time knowing him	feedback
Rut Mejias	mother	Curious well behaved child, well educated, studious, hard working, responsible and generous, always willing to help others. She misses him and waits for his return to the DR.

Govanna Gonzalez	Siste rin law	Hard working, responsible, sincere, doesn't get into problems often, values friendship, is empathetic to the needs of others, good friend.
Miguel Angel Rosario	Friend since 2016	Hard worker, happy disposition,
Maria de la Cruz	Neighbor since Aquino-Mejias was a child	Honest, respectful and responsible, well behaved and works well with others,
Yoseline Hinogosa	famiy friend for past 20 years	Honest, hard worker, good father, brother and neighbor.
Mary Diaz	Known since he was a child	Responsible and honest, Hard worker, respectful,
Maria Gonzalez	Neighbor for over 25 years	Responsible in school, hard worker, well mannered and friendly,
Ivelisse Contretas	Known him for past 20 years	Caring and responsible, hard worker, good friend,
Amelia Cabrera mejia	neice	Misses him during family reunions hoping for his safe quick return.
Daysilix Carrion	Partner, knows him for past 13 years	Respectful, loving father of his unborn child. She has witnessed how excellent a father he is to his son and her children. She will move to the DR to be with him there.
Jeydel Jose Aquino	son	Misses him and looks forward to being able to play with him.

Aquino-Mejias is a man who has endured hardship, paid his debt, and emerged with greater humility and resolve. He once left the Dominican Republic chasing the idea of a better life—but he has found that his best life is at home, grounded in redemption, responsibility, and a new beginning.

WHEREFORE, Aquino-Mejias respectfully requests this Honorable Courts note the information provided in this memorandum and sentence him to the time he has already served and supervision to follow.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this date I electronically filed the present motion with the Clerk of the Court using the CM/ECF system, which will send electronic notification of said filing to all parties of record.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED.

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, this 16th day of April 2025.

RACHEL BRILL
Federal Public Defender
District of Puerto Rico
S/Yasmin Irizarry
Yasmin Irizarry
Assistant Federal Public Defender
USDC-PR 213505
241 F.D. Roosevelt Avenue
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00918-2441
(787) 281-4922 Ext. 6363
Fax (787) 281-4899
Yasmin_Irizarry@fd.org